

## CHAPTER 3 WATER METERS

<b>Secs.</b>	
300	General Provisions
301	Meter Setters and Connections
302	Privately Owned Water Meters
303	Approval and Testing of Privately Owned Meters
304	Connection and Inspection of Privately Owned Meters
305	Maintenance of Privately Owned Meters
306	Notification of Property Owners
307	Sealing of Meters and Meter Bypasses
308	Technical Specifications for Privately Owned Meters
309	Meter Reading and Billing
310	Water and Sewer Rates for Certain Non-Profit Housing Developments
311	Enforcement
399	Definitions

### 300 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 300.1 District owned water meters are all meters, other than privately owned meters, installed without expense to the consumer by the Department of Public Works (the "Department"); and are defined, in general, as meters on water services which supply residential users that range in size from five-eighths inch (5/8 in.) through two inches (2 in.).
- 300.2 Privately owned water meters are those required to be installed and maintained at the expense of the consumer; and are defined, in general, as meters on water services which supply premises utilized for business purposes, and commercial and industrial purposes which require large quantities of water.
- 300.3 For purposes of this chapter, a "commercial water meter" is a meter which serves a premises used as other than a single family dwelling or a two-family flat, whether the premises is served directly from a District-owned water main or from an unmetered privately owned water main.
- 300.4 For purposes of this chapter, the term "preventive maintenance" means maintenance, including testing and repair (if necessary and when possible) performed in accordance with the current American Water Works Association (AWWA) schedule based on meter size and recorded consumption.

**AUTHORITY:** Unless otherwise noted, the authority for this chapter is Commissioners' Order 65-1154, dated August 19, 1965; §§401 and 402 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1967, effective August 11, 1967, filed August 11, 1967, D.C. Code Vol. 1 at 126 (1981 Ed.); Commissioner's Order 71-255, dated July 27, 1971; §412 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, as amended, 87 Stat. 790, Pub. L. No. 93-198, D.C. Code §1-227(a) (1992 Repl. Vol.).

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §§402.1 and 402.2 (October 1981); as amended by Final Rulemaking published at 28 DCR 2532 (June 5, 1981).

EDITOR'S NOTE: Transfer of functions - §219 of the "Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996," D.C. Law 11-111, effective April 18, 1996, transferred the functions of the Water and Sewer Utility Administration of the Department of Public Works to the independent District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority.

### 301 METER SETTERS AND CONNECTIONS

- 301.1 A meter setter or other approved fittings designed to receive a water meter, shall be a part of the water supply system of all new buildings where the water service is not more than two inches (2 in.) in diameter, except those buildings which will be required to be metered at the expense of the consumer, as provided in this chapter. Specific items to be furnished by the Department shall be at a cost to be determined from time to time by the Mayor.
- 301.2 The meter setter or other similar device shall be set in a horizontal position and shall be connected to the water service by risers of brass pipe or copper tubing so that the inlet and outlet of the appliance where the water meter is to be installed shall be eighteen inches (18 in.) below the permanent surface of the ground, as indicated on Department Drawing No. G-815.
- 301.3 With the exception of a stop valve, no other outlet will be permitted between the meter setter and the water main in the street.
- 301.4 The Department may permit the installation of the appliance in a cellar or basement; Provided, that when such permission is granted, the appliance shall be installed in a horizontal position adjacent to the wall where the water service enters the building, and shall be placed so that at all times it will be unobstructed and there will be easy access for examination, reading, and replacement.
- 301.5 Whenever water is introduced into a new building, the registered plumber shall be responsible for ascertaining permanent grade, attaching the meter setter to the service pipe, making a suitable opening for the placement of meter housing, and contacting the Department at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the installation of the meter.

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §§403.1 through 403.4 (October 1981).

### 302 PRIVATELY OWNED WATER METERS

- 302.1 The supply of water to the following shall be determined by meter in accordance with the provisions of this section to the following:
- (a) All manufacturing establishments, hotels, motels, swimming pools, gas tanks, bottling establishments, railroad yards, steamboats and wharves, brick yards;
  - (b) Other places requiring a large quantity of water, including all premises using fountains or automatic fixtures;



- (c) All premises supplied through a water service pipe of a diameter of two and one-half inches (2½ in.) or larger; and
- (d) Premises used for business purposes on which the water rent, under the schedule of rates, is established by the Department.

302.2 No water from the mains shall be introduced onto or used on premises which are supplied through a water meter or meters except water which passes through that (those) meter(s).

302.3 If a premises is required by law to be supplied with water by meter, the supply of water to any portion of the premises, for any purpose, shall be determined by meter.

302.4 The listing of certain premises on the schedule of rates does not exempt those premises from the requirements of the law with regard to the use of meters.

302.5 The necessary meters and appurtenances shall be provided, erected, and maintained by the consumer at the consumer's expense.

302.6 All meters shall be installed under the supervision of the Director and shall be installed so that they can be easily examined or read.

302.7 In case of violation of any of the requirements of this chapter, or of denial of free access to premises to inspectors or other persons entitled to access, or of tampering or interfering in any way with water meters or appurtenances, the supply of water shall be stopped and the supply shall not be restored for use of that consumer except upon payment of the cost actually incurred in shutting off and restoring the water supply.

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §§402.2(a)-c, 402.2 (f), 402.2(m), 402.2(s) (October 1981).

### 303 APPROVAL AND TESTING OF PRIVATELY OWNED METERS

303.1 Each water meter shall be of a make which has been approved by the Director, and before being installed, shall be sent, with a memorandum of the owner's name and location of the premises where the meter is to be used to the Department for testing.

303.2 Each meter shall be tested within forty-eight (48) hours and returned upon written order of the owner showing the name of the plumber who is to receive and install the meter.

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §402.2(d) (October 1981).

**304 CONNECTION AND INSPECTION OF PRIVATELY OWNED METERS**

304.1 Plumbers licensed by the District and employees of the Department are the only persons authorized to make connections with water mains and to install or remove water meters.

304.2 Licensed plumbers shall promptly notify the Department of the time when meters will be installed and ready for inspection and sealing.

304.3 Access to all premises supplied or to be supplied with water meters shall be granted at all proper times to water meter readers, work crews, inspectors or other persons as the Mayor may employ for the purpose of examining or reading meters or determining whether emergency repair is required.

304.4 If free access to premises is initially denied, the Department shall provide written notice to the owner of its next proposed date and time of entry.

304.5 If the Department is unable to gain access to the property after two (2) attempts, the owner or occupant shall be notified to contact the Department within three (3) business days, after the notice is mailed to the owner.

304.6 Failure by the owner or occupant to contact the Department shall be presumed to be refusal of access to the property and the Department may impose a penalty of one hundred dollars (\$100) and terminate the water and sewer services to the real property.

SOURCE: 12 DCCR §§402.2(g) and 402.2(p) (October 1981); as amended by Final Rulemaking published at 40 DCR 1300, 1305 (February 12, 1993).

**305 MAINTENANCE OF PRIVATELY OWNED METERS**

305.1 Consumers are required to keep their meters and appurtenances in repair and to protect them against frost and injury of any kind at their own expense.

305.2 In case of deficient supply through water meters or of any other cause for complaint, reports should be made to the Department so that the difficulty may be investigated and corrected.

305.3 Water meters and appurtenances shall not be removed, repaired, or in any manner tampered with, except upon a permit from the Department.

305.4 If a meter is removed for any cause, the Director may require another meter to be put in its place.

305.5 Each water meter shall be inspected periodically by representatives of the Department. Inspection shall be conducted in accordance with the American Water Works Association schedule.

305.6 Any water meter may be removed for preventive maintenance, repair, or replacement at any time, in the discretion of the Department.



- 305.7 A water meter that registers no consumption or lower than average consumption, or a meter that is suspected of inaccurate registration, may be inspected and removed for testing and repair or replacement at any time by the Department.
- 305.8 The Department may offer a property owner the option of arranging with a licensed plumber to remove a commercial water meter and deliver it to the Meter and Measurement Division for testing and repair.
- 305.9 A property owner exercising the removal option under §305.8 must deliver the meter to the Meter and Measurement Division within two (2) working days after its removal or within fourteen (14) calendar days after written notification that the meter is due for maintenance or is registering inaccurately, whichever occurs first. Meters not removed within the prescribed period may be removed by the Meter and Measurement Division.
- 305.10 Any commercial meter which is to be retrieved and returned to service by a licensed plumber after maintenance by the Meter Branch shall be returned to service within two (2) working days after retrieval of the meter or within fourteen (14) calendar days of notification to the property owner that maintenance of the meter has been completed, whichever occurs first. Meters not returned to service within the prescribed time may be reinstalled by the Meter and Measurement Division.
- 305.11 If conditions exist (such as lack of access, faulty pipes, or other obstacles) that prevent the Department from removing a meter, and if the correction of those conditions is the responsibility of the property owner, the Department may do either of the following:
- (a) Require the property owner to remove and deliver the meter to the Meter and Measurement Division within fourteen (14) days after written notification that the conditions exist; or
  - (b) Require the property owner to correct the conditions in a timely manner.
- 305.12 If the Department determines that a commercial water meter is obsolete or not repairable, the Department may require the property owner to purchase an approved replacement meter. Replacement meters and their appurtenances must be approved by the Department.
- 305.13 Replacement meters shall be installed (or arrangements shall be made with the Meter Branch for installation) within thirty (30) days of written notification to the property owner that a meter is obsolete or not repairable.
- 305.14 The Department shall assess fees to the property owner to recover the costs incurred by the Department for all services performed under this section. All fees shall be paid to the Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing. Fees due under this section shall be paid within thirty (30) days of the rendition of the bill. Failure to pay fees on time may result in the denial of water to the premises concerned.

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §§402.2)(e), 402.2(q) (October 1981); as amended by Final Rulemaking published at 28 DCR 2532 (June 5, 1981).

**306 NOTIFICATION OF PROPERTY OWNERS**

- 306.1 Written notice required under this chapter shall be mailed to property owners at the mailing address on file with the Department.
- 306.2 Property owners may have notices mailed to an address other than the service or property address if the owner provides an alternate address to Consumer Service (Commercial), Meter and Measurement Division, 301 Bryant Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001 (Telephone: 673-6578).

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 28 DCR 2532, 2533 (June 5, 1981).

**307 SEALING OF METERS AND METER BYPASSES**

- 307.1 All meters and meter bypasses shall be sealed by the Department. The Department shall be notified within three (3) days after a meter is installed so that seals may be installed by the Department.
- 307.2 Seals shall be removed from meters and meter bypasses only by the Department. The Department shall be notified at least forty-eight (48) hours before a meter is removed in order to remove the seals.
- 307.3 Water charges to the customer for any period during which the seals are removed shall be based on the average amount of water consumed daily by the customer between the date the new or repaired meter was installed and the date a follow-up reading was taken.

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 28 DCR 2532, 2533 (June 5, 1981).

**308 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR PRIVATELY OWNED METERS**

- 308.1 Fifteen inch (15 in.) meter pits shall be terra-cotta or fiber pipe. The frames and covers shall be in accordance with Department Drawing No. G-803-4A, latest revision.
- 308.2 Meters which are two and one-half inches (2½ in.) or larger may be installed either inside or outside of a building.
- 308.3 Eighteen inch (18 in.), twenty inch (20 in.), twenty-four inch (24 in.), and thirty inch (30 in.) private meter pits shall be terra-cotta, fiber, or concrete pipe. The frames and covers shall be in accordance with Department G-803-4, latest revision.
- 308.4 Meter installation layout for compound meters located outside of a building shall be in accordance with Department Drawing No. G-808, latest revision.
- 308.5 A meter located inside a building shall have the same piping layout as indicated on Drawing No. G-808, latest revision, and shall have a floor drain within five feet (5 ft.) of the meter.



- 308.6 Meter installation layout for fire service type meters for use on fire and domestic combination services shall be in accordance with Department Drawing No. G-807, latest revision.
- 308.7 Meter installation layout for private and District regular service meters shall be in accordance with composite drawings showing meter settings five-eighths inch through two inches (5/8 in. - 2 in.) and frames and covers for eighteen inch (18 in.), twenty inch (20 in.), twenty-four inch (24 in.), and thirty inch (30 in.) meter pits, Department Drawings Nos. G-815, G-803-4, and G-903-4A (latest revisions).
- 308.8 Meter installation layout for detector check fire service only shall be in accordance with Department Drawing No. G-813, latest revision.
- 308.9 Each water meter shall be provided with a by-pass valve, and a valve will be placed on each side of the meter so that it can be removed without depriving the premises of water.
- 308.10 If placed on a pipe leading to a steam boiler or hot water boiler, or in any position where it may be exposed to a back pressure of steam or hot water, the water meter shall be protected by a check valve set between the meter and the vessel it supplies.
- 308.11 Whenever a check valve is installed on a private supply pipe to protect the meter from a back pressure of steam or hot water, a safety valve shall also be installed on that supply pipe between the check valve and boiler to relieve excessive pressure.
- 308.12 Before setting a water meter, the service pipe leading to it shall be well blown out in order to remove any accumulation of sediment.
- 308.13 The use of red lead in making joints in pipes connected with water meters shall be prohibited.
- 308.14 Pipe compound shall be applied to male pipe threads only.
- 308.15 Information and drawings pertaining to the installation of water meters pits and vaults shall be available from the Department.

**SOURCE:** 12 DCRR §§402.2(h-l) and 402.2(w) (October 1981).

**309 METER READING AND BILLING**

- 309.1 Meters shall be read quarterly, or at such other times as the Director shall determine.
- 309.2 If free access to the premises cannot be gained for the purpose of reading a District or privately-owned meter at the interval(s) determined by the Director under this chapter, the water charge for that interval or succeeding intervals shall be based on the average previous consumption for that interval until access can be gained and actual consumption determined by meter readings.

- 309.3 If at any time, a meter fails to register correctly or bears evidence of having been tampered with, as determined by qualified personnel of the Department, the water charge for the interval in which the incident occurred shall be based on the average previous water consumption for that interval.
- 309.4 In case of excessive water consumption seemingly due to invisible leakage from an underground service pipe on either public or private property between the meter and fixtures, the Director is authorized to make adjustment of the water bill; Provided, that the following conditions and requirements are met:
- (a) There has been no negligence on the part of the owners in notifying the Department of unusual conditions indicative of waste of water;
  - (b) Upon ascertaining the existence of an invisible leak, the owner has taken prompt steps to have the leak repaired;
  - (c) The Department has been notified immediately, and notification was made prior to repairs when the leak is exposed;
  - (d) Repairs have been made by a registered plumber and approved by the Chief, Plumbing Inspection Branch, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA);
  - (e) The request for adjustment is made to the Department within thirty (30) days of the date of rendition of a water bill after the leak has been repaired; and
  - (f) Form SE-138, obtainable from the Department, shall be furnished to the Department. The form shall be completed in full, signed by the owner of the premises or the owner's agent, and certified by the plumber making repairs.

SOURCE: 12 DCRR §§402.2(p), 402.2(r) and 402.2(u) (October 1981).

### 310 WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR CERTAIN NON-PROFIT HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

- 310.1 The provisions of this section set forth the procedure and criteria for granting and determining eligibility for water and sewer rate charges reduction or forgiveness under the "Non-profit Housing Developments' Water and Sanitary Sewer Service Charges Reduction and the Consumer Credit Interest Rate Amendments Clarification Act of 1982" (D.C. Law 4-112, effective June 4, 1982).
- 310.2 The Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing, Department of Public Works, is vested with the authority delegated to the Director by Mayor's Order No. 82-220.
- 310.3 A written application for the reduced water and sanitary sewer rates shall be submitted to the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing on a form approved by the Director. Failure to furnish any of the required information may be considered as grounds for disapproval of an application.



310.4 Each application shall include the following:

- (a) The name, address, and description (number and type of units and occupants) of the housing development;
- (b) The name and principal business address (and local business if different) of the owner (or each co-owner) of the development;
- (c) A description of the non-profit activities carried on by the owner(s) during the preceding year, identifying those non-profit activities that were carried on in the District of Columbia;
- (d) A copy of each owner's organizational documents (such as the articles of incorporation or certificate of partnership) and internal regulations (such as by-laws or partnership agreement);
- (e) If claiming eligibility because the project is federally assisted, copies of the pertinent federal document (such as the §8 contract) indicating the assistance is being received;
- (f) A signed statement from a plumber licensed to do business in the District and not employed by the applicant, certifying that the plumbing infrastructure of the housing project is in good condition and not leaking; and
- (g) Any other information relating to the non-profit nature of the applicant or the soundness of the plumbing system that the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing.

310.5 Owners of non-profit housing developments determined to be eligible for reduced rates for water and sanitary sewer services shall submit, prior to expiration, a notarized letter stating that there has been no change in the ownership or non-profit nature of the housing development during the preceding year which would affect its eligibility for the reduced rates. Failure to submit the notarized letter shall result in expiration of the housing development's eligibility for the reduced rates.

310.6 If the ownership of a non-profit housing development changes at any time, eligibility of the development for reduced rates shall expire immediately. A new application for reduced rates shall be filed with the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing, and a new determination of eligibility shall be made.

310.7 Upon written request of a non-profit housing development entitled to reduced water and sanitary sewer rates, the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing may forgive, in whole or in part, any outstanding water and sanitary sewer service charges owed by the housing development for the period January 1, 1977 through December 31, 1981, if the housing development establishes, to the satisfaction of the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing, all of the following:

- (a) That the housing development is currently experiencing severe financial difficulty;
- (b) That the housing development is unable to pay the outstanding water and sanitary sewer charges; and
- (c) That forgiveness of the charges will help ensure the non-profit housing development's continued operation.

310.8 In establishing severe financial difficulty the housing development may submit evidence of at least one (1) of the following:

- (a) The housing development is two (2) or more months in arrears on its mortgage payments;
- (b) The housing development has received notice of foreclosure from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);
- (c) The housing development has had its mortgage assigned to HUD; or
- (d) The housing development is unable to meet other financial obligations of the project.

310.9 In making a decision concerning the eligibility of a non-profit housing development for reduced water and sanitary sewer charges, the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing shall examine information relating to the ownership, use, subsidies, and occupancy of the non-profit housing development in accordance with paragraph 5 of D.C. Law 4-11. To conduct this examination the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing, may do the following:

- (a) Review the books and accounts of the housing development;
- (b) Examine the housing development's history of payment of other utilities;
- (c) Require that the housing development submit a signed statement that the plumbing infrastructure is in good condition and not leaking, unless such a statement has been submitted within the previous six (6) months pursuant to §310.4(f);
- (d) Require efforts by the housing development and its tenants to conserve water and reduce waste water; and
- (e) Review any other records deemed pertinent to establish the true financial status of the housing development and whether the housing development has taken action which might be necessary to mitigate water and sanitary sewer charges.

310.10 The Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing may consider the failure to furnish any of the information requested as grounds for disapproval of the request for forgiveness of outstanding water and sanitary sewer charges.



- 310.11** The decision on each application for reduced rates or forgiveness of outstanding charges shall be made by the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing of the Department. Appeals of the Chief, Bureau of Water Measurement and Billing, denial of eligibility for reduced rates for water and sanitary sewer service or decision not to forgive outstanding water and sewer charges may be made to the Director. The decision of the Director shall be final.

**SOURCE:** Final Rulemaking published at 30 DCR 2551 (May 27, 1983).

**311 ENFORCEMENT**

- 311.1** In addition to any other penalty authorized by law, violations of this chapter shall result in the termination of the water supply which shall not be restored until all arrears of water charges, together with penalties and the costs incurred in terminating and restoring the water supply, are paid. The same penalties shall apply when any District inspector is denied access to premises for the purpose of inspecting, reading, or installing water meters, and when any water meter or appurtenance is tampered with in any way.

**SOURCE:** Final Rulemaking published at 40 DCR 1300, 1306 (February 12, 1993).

**399 DEFINITIONS**

- 399.1** When used in this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed:

**Dwelling unit** - a habitable room with kitchen and bathroom facilities exclusively under the control of and for the use of the occupant.

**Privately owned water meters** - meters required to be installed, at no cost to the District, for the measurement of water supplied and used by commercial and industrial users or by premises with three (3) or more separate dwelling units.

**SOURCE:** Final Rulemaking published at 40 DCR 1300, 1306 (February 12, 1993).

